

## THE MEANING OF SUNDA CULTURAL CONSTRUCTION FOR JAVANESE INDIVIDUALS IN BANDUNG

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**ABSTRACT.** The aim of this study was to investigate how Javanese individuals in Bandung perceive and apply the Sundanese culture, otherwise known as *Kasundaan*. We utilized a qualitative research approach, employing phenomenology, and interviewed seven Javanese informants with *Kasundaan* experience in their daily lives. Our data collection methods included interviews, observations, documentation, and literature studies. This study revealed that there was an extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivating Aspects as well as aspects of hope that motivated Javanese individuals in applying *Kasundaan*. Family environment, social environment, and the natural environment played a very big role in the formation of the meaning of *kasundaan* on the Javanese and Chinese individual subjects of this research through their cultural literary experience in their lives. Being a Sundanese, for the research subjects was interpreted philosophically as a perspective and “nyunda” mindset and manifested in the form of a real contribution to the Sunda. This interpretation gives rise to self meaning of the Javanese individual in being a Sundanese, namely the self that explores Sundanese cultural knowledge and the self as a preserver of Sundanese culture.

**Keywords:** cultural knowledge; cultural preserver; Javanese ancestry; *Kasundaan*; *Sundanese cultural*

## KONSTRUKSI MAKNA BERBUDAYA SUNDA PADA INDIVIDU JAWA DI BANDUNG

**ABSTRAK.** Penelitian ini bertujuan mengungkap konstruksi makna budaya Sunda individu Jawa di Bandung. *Kasundaan* diartikan sebagai hal-hal yang berkaitan dengan budaya Sunda. Kami menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan fenomenologi untuk menggali pengalaman tujuh informan keturunan Jawa yang menerapkan *Kasundaan* dalam pemikiran, perilaku, dan hasil karya. Data penelitian diperoleh melalui wawancara, observasi, serta studi dokumentasi dan literatur. Hasil penelitian mengungkapkan, terdapat aspek pendorong ekstrinsik dan intrinsik serta aspek harapan yang menjadi motif ber-*Kasundaan* individu Jawa di Bandung. Lingkungan keluarga, lingkungan sosial dan lingkungan alam memberikan peran besar dalam pembentukan makna ber-*Kasundaan* pada subjek penelitian ini melalui pengalaman berliterasi budaya yang mereka jalani. Berbudaya Sunda dimaknai secara filosofis sebagai cara pandang dan pola pikir *nyunda* yang diwujudkan dalam bentuk kontribusi nyata bagi Sunda. Pemaknaan tersebut memunculkan makna diri individu Jawa dalam ber-*Kasundaan*, yaitu diri yang menggali pengetahuan budaya Sunda serta diri sebagai pemelihara budaya Sunda.

**Kata kunci:** Budaya Sunda; *Kasundaan*; keturunan Jawa; pemelihara budaya; pengetahuan budaya.

### INTRODUCTION

Bandung, as the center of West Java, is growing rapidly compared to other cities. Various facilities to support the running of the government are an attraction for people from outside the region to visit Bandung. Bandung has also grown into a city with various diversities, including the diversity of its residents who have various backgrounds. In addition to the Sundanese who are the “owners” of the area, in Bandung there are also other ethnicities who come or settle for various reasons. One of them is the Javanese ethnicity, which is the second largest after Sundanese, with a percentage of 12.68 percent and the majority comes from Central Java (<http://jabar.bps.go.id>).

The adaptation process was carried out to adjust to Sundanese culture. The interaction that takes place gives rise to perceptions and meanings of Sundanese culture. The adaptation

process creates a sense of belonging and makes Sundanese culture a part of Javanese individuals who apply *Kasundaan* in their daily lives.

The existence of Javanese individuals who practice *Kasundaan*, is a phenomenon that appears in the life of Sundanese society in West Java. The work of art is a form of interpretation of *Kasundaan* obtained through interaction and communication that occurs between Javanese individuals and Sundanese society. They are active individuals who construct reality according to their will, as stated by Bungin.

“...individuals are free human beings who carry out relationships between humans with one another. Individuals become determinants in the social world that is constructed based on their will. Individuals are not victims of social facts but as creative production and reproduction machines in constructing their social world.” (Basrowi & Sukidin, 2002)

The emergence of Javanese individuals who love *Kasundaan* cannot be separated from the interaction that occurs between them and Sundanese culture, which live and grow in the Sundanese land, one of which is in the city of Bandung. The city is open for anyone to come and live so that the background of the population becomes heterogeneous. Not only Sundanese *pituin* (original) based on lineage, but also people from various ethnicities. This condition makes Bandung a multicultural city.

Despite its diversity, Sundanese culture in Bandung remains the dominant culture, which has more power than the culture of the migrants. This was revealed in a study by Edward Bruner (1974) of Northern Illinois University, conducted in the 1960s and 1970s, comparing two cities, Bandung and Medan. The results showed that Sundanese people in Bandung are the majority and dominant, i.e. they set the benchmarks for appropriate behavior that should be exhibited in public places and almost all urban institutions in Bandung are controlled by Sundanese people and operate according to Sundanese cultural patterns. They occupy key positions in the city's power structure from governors, mayors, rectors of local universities, to heads of regional offices.

In social life in Bandung, individual migrants adapt themselves to Sundanese culture and tend to become Sundanese-like. Meanwhile, in Medan, each ethnic group creates social order in their ethnic community. In public places, they compete with each other by activating their respective nationalities.

In relation to this research, Bruner's hypothesis about Sundanese culture as the dominant culture in Bandung is still relevant. Based on the researcher's observations, the elements of *Sundanese* are still clearly felt in language as well as dress and art. These three elements are still practiced by the Sundanese community. Key positions in the power structure in Bandung are still controlled by Sundanese people. Similarly, the content of information or broadcasts in print and electronic media in Bandung. There are local television broadcasts that air Sundanese-language programs in the form of information and entertainment. Local newspapers, too, are dominated by news that occurs around Sundanese Land or West Java. Some print media in the form of magazines and newspapers, there are still some that consistently publish information about *Kasundaan* and written in Sundanese.

Sundanese culture as the dominant culture has the power to attract migrants to adapt to the culture. More interaction and communication with Sundanese people, slowly makes Javanese individuals who are research subjects adapt to Sundanese culture as a culture that penetrates their thoughts and feelings consciously or naturally.

The meaning of *Kasundaan* from the adaptation process is one of the drivers for the Javanese individual informants of this study to immerse themselves as part of Sundanese culture, by playing an active role as a perpetrator.

The term *Kasundaan* used in this study is intended to mean anything that is Sundanese or has Sundanese characteristics, as stated in R.A. Danadibrata's *Kamus Basa Sunda*, which writes that *Kasundaan* is the *characteristics, customs of Sundanese people* (Danadibrata, 2006)

Ekadjati explained that *Kasundaan* is the knowledge and appreciation of Sundanese culture, in the form of Sundanese life values and livelihoods, which are applied in everyday life individually and socially (Suryalaga, 2009: 71). While *nyunda* is defined as behaving and having the character of *urang Sunda*, which is able to apply the meaning and significance of the word Sunda (*Kasundaan*) in the behavior of life (Suryalaga, 2009)

The Sundanese people referred to in this study are Sundanese people based on self-recognition and socio-culturally, who factually apply the principles of *Kasundaan* in their daily lives, although genetically, they are not *pituin* (original) Sundanese. They are Javanese ethnic individuals who have applied *Kasundaan* in their daily lives in various forms.

The choice of Javanese as the research subject is based on their great adaptability in interacting with Sundanese ethnicity and culture. The influx of *Kasundaan* values to Javanese individuals, consciously or unconsciously, affects the way they perceive Sundanese culture and its application in daily life. Based on this, the focus of this research is: "How is the construction of meaning of *Kasundaan* for Javanese individuals in Bandung?". The objectives of this study are 1) Finding the motives of Javanese individuals in practicing *Kasundaan*; 2) Finding the meaning of construction of *Kasundaan* on Javanese individuals who live it.

## METHOD

The study utilized qualitative methodology, specifically adopting a phenomenological approach. As Moleong (2011) explains, this

method aims to comprehend research subjects' experiences holistically, including their behavior, perception, motivation, and action. This is achieved by providing descriptive language in a natural context using various scientific methods. With a phenomenological approach, as described by Polkinghorne, the study aimed to reveal the significance of the lived experiences of a group of Javanese individuals regarding a particular phenomenon by exploring the structure of human consciousness (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation studies, including written documents, photographs, and online information to support the findings. The informants of this research are Javanese individuals who practice Sundanese culture in daily life. They were deemed relevant to the research objectives.

Seven Javanese individuals were selected using a snowball sampling technique, which involved obtaining research informants from other informants. The research subjects provided primary data to support the study and additional information about individuals who could provide further insight into the research topic (Jorgensen, 1990).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Alfred Schutz (Schutz, 1967) divides motives in social phenomenology into two categories, namely 'in order to motives' and 'because motives'. In order to motives are described as intentions, plans, hopes, and goals to be achieved in the future. Because motives refer to the individual's past as the reason for doing something.

In this study, *motives* are used as the driving aspect, which is divided into **Extrinsic Motivating Aspects**, which come from outside the individual, and **Intrinsic Motivating Aspects** which come from within the individual and the nuclear family. 'In order to motives' are used as the expectation aspect.

### Extrinsic Motivating Aspects

**Table 1. Extrinsic Motivating Aspects of Javanese Individuals in Practicing *Kasundaan***

No.	Extrinsic Motives	Informant(s)
1.	Interaction with the social and natural environment	Jeihan Sukmantoro, Trianti Nugraheni, Indrawati Lukman, Sunaryo
2.	Information of Sundanese Culture	Anthony Soetrisno, Jakob Sumardjo

### 3. Dynamism of Rhythm and Motion

Endang Caturwati

#### ***Interaction with Social and Natural Environment***

The social and natural environment are crucial factors in shaping one's lifestyle and appreciation for their culture. A prime example is Jeihan, a painter who began his career in the Sundanese community of Bandung in the 1960s. Jeihan came to Bandung to study at the Faculty of Fine Arts, ITB. Settling in Gang Mesjid, Cicadas, friendly Sundanese locals who supported him during difficult times surrounded him. Over time, Jeihan embraced the Sundanese culture and felt like the community.

The book *Apa dan Siapa Orang Sunda* (Rosidi, 2003) solidified Jeihan's recognition as a Sundanese figure by including him among notable figures in the fine arts field. Being the only Javanese individual to receive recognition as a significant Sundanese figure made Jeihan proud.

Trianti, a lecturer in Ethnochoreography at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI), loves Sundanese culture after marrying a Sundanese individual and has lived in Bandung since 1995. Her interactions with the local social environment gradually introduced her to Sundanese culture, which she began to appreciate and embrace.

Indrawati Lukman, a Sundanese traditional dance master of Javanese origin, feels like a true Sundanese after living among the locals. Her interactions with the Sundanese community have made her identify as a Sundanese than a Javanese.

"I was born in Bandung. I live my daily life with Sundanese people. My father's family comes from Tegal, Central Java. True Javanese. But, my life can't be Javanese, because I've been in Sunda since I was born. I went to school in Sukabumi and Bandung, so I am a true Sundanese, even though my name is *Jawareh*, *Jawa sawareh* (half Javanese), Indrawati Lukman Carvacrolia Purwohadikusumo." (Lukman, interview)

For Sunaryo, nature is a never-ending source of inspiration. Many of his works are inspired by the social and natural environment around him, including his monumental work, *Wot Batu*.

"Because I'm here, I only live in the closest environment. People see that it suits Sunda, it's adapting the closest environment. Anyway, what fits with life, fits with today's environment." (Sunaryo, interview)



Sunaryo lived in Bandung since 1962 when he study at Faculty of Fine Arts, ITB. He starts his career as an artist in the 1970s, after he became a lecturer at his alma mater. Through his adaptability to the surrounding nature, Sunaryo could produce works inspired by the land of Pasundan, one of which is the Monumen Perjuangan Rakyat Jawa Barat on Jalan Dipati Ukur, that inspired by a grove of bamboo trees.

### Information of Sundanese Culture

Anthony Soetrisno and Jakob Sumardjo were motivated to embrace and practising *Kasundaan* in their daily lives due to their love for the Sundanese culture. For Anthony, his interest in Sundanese culture started in 2009 when he began searching for information about the values of Sunda Wiwitan, the indigenous religion of the Sundanese people. He was fascinated by how the indigenous people interacted and lived in Sundanese land. After a year of searching, he found out that Sundanese culture is open and not ethnocentric.

Anthony expressed his appreciation for the Sundanese culture by creating accessories from grains, such as bracelets and necklaces. For him, his creations represent his admiration for the Sundanese culture that values grains as fellow living beings.

Jakob Sumardjo's interest in Sunda was driven by the ease of obtaining data to understand the way Sundanese people think through the artifacts he researched. He went directly to the places where the artifacts were found, which were generally outside Bandung, such as the Indigenous Village in Cikelet, Kampung Dukuh, Kampung Naga, Ciburuy, Kampung Pulo, as well as the Karang Kamulyan site, a site that Jakob first researched in 2006.



Figure 1. Jakob Sumardjo explaining the meaning of symbols found at the Kabuyutan site in Ciamis.

### The Dynamism of Rhythm and Motion

The dynamism of rhythms and motion of Sundanese dance became an extrinsic motivating aspect for Endang Caturwati, a Professor of Dance at Institut Seni Budaya Indonesia (ISBI) Bandung, to implement *Kasundaan* through dance. Endang first became interested in Sundanese dance when she saw it being performed near her residence when she was still in Cibangkong Elementary School Bandung, in 1963. The beauty of the dance captivated her and inspired her to learn it.

Endang, who grew up in a strong Javanese culture family, noticed the difference between the Javanese dances she learned first and the Sundanese dances she saw.

“In the past, I was learning Javanese dance, which is very smooth and slow. When I saw Sundanese dance, Topeng Dance, Anjasmara Dance, it was lively, the drums were more attractive, and it brought the spirit of life.” (Caturwati, interview)

The extrinsic motivating aspects of Javanese individuals living *kasundaan* are depicted in the following chart:

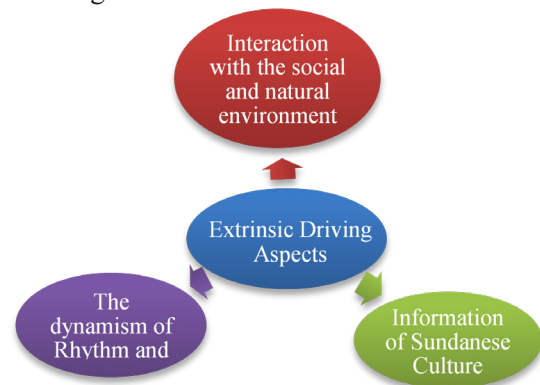


Figure 2. Extrinsic Motivating Aspects of Javanese Individuals in practicing *Kasundaan*.

### Intrinsic Motivating Aspects

The informants in this study were not only driven by external factors, but also by factors from within themselves and their family environment, which we refer to as intrinsic motivating aspects. In brief, the results are presented as follows:

Table 2. Intrinsic Motivating Aspects of Javanese Individuals in Practicing *Kasundaan*

No.	Intrinsic Motives	Informant(s)
1.	Interests, hobbies and talents	Jakob, Indrawati, Endang
2.	Rootedness in Sundanese culture	Jeihan, Anthony
3.	Desire to fit in	Sunaryo, Trianti

### ***Interests, Hobbies and Talents***

Interest is a high inclination towards something, passion, desire (Kemdikbud, 2017). A hobby is a favorite, special pleasure in leisure time, not the main job (Kemdikbud, 2017). Talent is the basis (intelligence, nature and innate) that is carried from birth. Interest is a strong urge in a person that encourages him to do something in realizing his desires. Hobbies are only recreational and usually done in their spare time to calm one's mind. Talent supports individuals to develop according to their interests and hobbies.

Interest in Sundanese literature and artifacts is an intrinsic motivating aspect for Jakob Sumardjo to undergo *Kasundaan* in the form of searching for the fundamental mindset of Sundanese society. Jakob's interest in the culture he has known since becoming a lecturer at STSI in the 1980s stems from the existence of Sundanese literature and artifacts that attract his attention. As a lover of literature, Jakob did not want to miss the opportunity to further research the Sundanese pantun literary works, which contained symbols that attracted his attention to know their philosophical meaning.

As time passed by, Jakob discovered that the philosophical meanings of Sundanese society are not only found in pantun, but also in other objects, such as houses, caves, and artifacts. Starting in 2000, Jakob's interest grew, namely in the archaeological sites left behind by the old Sundanese community. From these sites, Jakob found the essence of the Sundanese mindset in interacting with each other and with the natural environment, through his philosophical interpretation of existing artifacts.

The philosophy lecturer at several universities said research on the cultural patterns of the old Sundanese community through artifacts was carried out to find the truth of knowledge about Sundanese culture that he wanted to prove, not to get praise or strings attached from anyone.

Great interest and support by talent is also an intrinsic motivating aspect for Endang Caturwati to undergo *Kasundaan* through dance. The former STSI rector's artistic talent was inherited from her father, a PINDAD employee who loved the arts and had an art group called Mardi Laras.

Since childhood, Endang was taught by her father to love art, especially Javanese culture, by learning Javanese dance and gamelan. Although she grew up in a family environment that

prioritized Javanese culture, Endang was allowed to choose other cultures she wanted to learn, as long as she did not leave Javanese culture when she was at home. Endang chose Sundanese dance to expand her artistic skills. Endang learned Sundanese dance from Pak Uba, Pak Konde Ilyas, Pak Aim Salim and Pak Iyus Suling.

In addition to dancing, Endang also practiced singing. After finishing junior high school, Endang continued her studies at the Karawitan Conservatory, now known as SMKN 10 Bandung. There, she learned a lot about karawitan or traditional Sundanese music through the tutelage of Sundanese karawitan artist Mang Koko.

Dancing has been a part of Indrawati Lukman's life. She loves the classical Sundanese dances she learned as a child. She did not think about material when asked to dance. In 1964-1966, Indrawati had the opportunity to study choreography at an art school in the United States. After school, Indrawati had the ability to create dance works. Most of the dances produced were princess dances or dances for women. For example Rineka Dewi, Anom Sari, Anggana Laras, Gentra Pinutri. I am a princess."

In 1968, Indrawati established the Indra School of Dance (STI) at Graha Karya Wanita, Jalan LRE. Martadinata, Bandung. She built the school herself and maintains it to this day as a place to regenerate the classical Sundanese dances she learned from Pak Tjetje Somantri as well as a number of her own dances.



**Figure 3. Lukman and her dancers before performing on her 70 Anniversary show in Bandung in 2014.**

Source: Indrawati private collection

### ***Rootedness in Sundanese Culture***

Rootedness in Sundanese culture is defined as the internalization of Sundanese culture in individuals so that their behavior patterns are based on Sundanese cultural values. Informants who felt rootedness as an intrinsic driving factor of *kasundaan* were Jeihan and Anthony.

Jeihan strongly believes that the intrinsic factor that drives him to apply *kasundaan* in his daily life is because he comes from Sunda. According to him, although he is of Javanese descent, his ancestors are Sundanese, as he said below.

Jeihan's belief in his feelings is based on his knowledge of the history of the formation of kingdoms in Java Island, which was preceded by a kingdom in West Java, namely the Galuh Kingdom. In addition, his success as a famous painter, he believes, is a manifestation of the compatibility of two different cultures, Javanese and Sundanese, that exist within him.

For Anthony, his rootedness in Sundanese culture is through internalizing the philosophical values of Sundanese culture into himself so that his outlook on life and work is based on these philosophical values. The results of his search for Sundanese culture, which he obtained through social interactions and independent searches through written sources, opened his insight that Sunda has very noble local wisdom values, especially those related to the natural environment, which Anthony likes. One of them is the principle of cageur, bageur, bener, singer, pinter.



**Figure 4. Anthony and his handcrafted grain jewelry**

Source: Author's documentation, 2015

Anthony believes that the philosophy of Sundanese culture can be used as a guide to life. Therefore, Anthony chose a way to show his love for the Sundanese culture by promoting local wisdom values that are in harmony with nature through seeds, which are processed into accessories in the form of bracelets and necklaces to enhance appearance. According to Anthony's understanding, philosophically, grains are the core source of life, as the origin of living things

that represent the local wisdom of the Sundanese people and are universal, since 2010.

Apart from his works, Anthony's appreciation for Sundanese culture is also manifested by wearing Sundanese clothing, in the form of pangsi and Sundanese headscarf in his daily life when he works. He also wears bracelets and necklaces made from grains as a way to introduce grains to the public since 2010.

### ***Adaptation to the Environment***

For artist Sunaryo, the desire to fit in with the environment is an intrinsic motivating factor for applying *kasundaan* in everyday life. Since coming to Bandung to study at ITB Fine Arts in 1962, the Banyumas-born man had the principle that where the earth is, the sky is, so when living in Cisitu during college, Sunaryo adapted to the surrounding community in order to become part of them. Similarly, when working as an artist, the father of three adapted to his natural surroundings. He uses his intuitive sensitivity to absorb ideas from the Sundanese natural environment to be realized in a form of work.

In the process of adaptation, Sunaryo felt that the cultural atmosphere in Bandung was not much different from his birthplace, Banyumas, Central Java, so he did not feel unfamiliar.

For the owner of Selasar Sunaryo Art Space (SSAS), adapting to nature is an obligation, because there is an attachment between humans and nature. Good adaptation between humans and nature will result in harmonization.



**Figure 5. Julang Ngapak, a typical Sundanese roof, which Sunaryo applied to the Selasar Sunaryo building.**

Source: Author's documentation, 2015

Meanwhile, Trianti Nugraheni, a lecturer in the Department of Dance at the University of Education of Indonesia (UPI), also felt that the intrinsic aspect that encouraged her to become Sundanese was her desire to socialize with the Sundanese community around her as a form of adaptation to Sundanese culture that she had just entered in 1995 after she married and brought by her husband to live in Bandung.



The interaction that the woman from Sragen, Central Java had with the Sundanese community around her made her comfortable with the pattern of Sundanese society, which made her feel developed.

Trianti admitted that this comfort was created because she had previously known Sundanese culture from her closest family, that is her mother who was born in Lengkong Besar, Bandung. In daily life, her mother often calls Trianti's older cousin *eneng*, which she thinks is more pleasant to hear and feels younger.

Sundanese culture is known as a culture that highly respects manners. In general, the character of Sundanese-people is cheerful, friendly, and always smile (Melalato in Fahrullah, Kosasih, Rohmayani, & Mahdi, 2022). Trianti feels that her openness is honed by Sundanese culture. The mother of two children feels that she is more able to express her feelings after interacting with Sundanese people. Her husband and family are also recognized by Trianti as having a big influence on her to be more comfortable and open.

### Aspect of Hope

Hope is a forward-looking concept that encompasses intentions, goals, plans, interests, and more. This study identified two aspects of hope that participants expressed: preserving Sundanese culture and fostering appreciation for nature.

Preserving Sundanese culture is a crucial aspect of hope for most participants. They engage in cultural arts to keep *Kasundaan* alive. Endang, for example, hopes that her work, teaching, and art can preserve Sundanese culture. She acknowledges that Sundanese culture will evolve with time, but she still holds on to the hope that it can be preserved, particularly through education.

"The key thing now is for the next generation to be willing to keep it alive, especially through education. As long as everyone agrees, changes can be made, and it can be taught in schools. Leaders can also promote it by showcasing it at events, and it will undoubtedly thrive again." (Caturwati, interview)

Trianti, who works in dance and cultural education, has observed that traditional culture is dwindling, particularly among the younger generation. Many young people do not recognize traditional arts, and the value of politeness is also

fading away. To prevent this, Trianti has made efforts to maintain the culture through education.

"In every lesson, I always directed to tradition, local wisdom, and character building, base on tradition and the values of local wisdom. That is one of my efforts so that tradition is not eroded." (Nugraheni, interview)

The founder of Studio Tari Indra, Indrawati Lukman, hopes that Sundanese dance will be loved and learned by many people, especially young people. For Indrawati, preserving Sundanese dance does not mean following the standard movement patterns she learned from Tjetje Somantri. To encourage young people to love Sundanese dance, with her experience as a choreographer, Indrawati developed Sundanese dance with more interesting music, dynamic movements, and glamorous costumes. The development was done as an adjustment to the current conditions, in order to attract more young audiences to love Sundanese dance.

"I do the preservation by developing the dance, because the audience is the younger generation. Kids today are too lazy to watch a 12-minute dance. So if they say the music is good, they enjoy it, so they are proud to say, this is my art." (Lukman, interview)

For Jakob, the hope he wants to achieve in his research is to provide new knowledge about Sundanese culture by revealing the mindset of Sundanese society through literary works and artifacts of Sundanese ancient cultural heritage. The study is carried out with great scientific enthusiasm to reveal the truth of knowledge obtained selflessly.

Jakob hopes that by finding the core of the Sundanese mindset through the artifacts or literary works he studies, Sundanese people can easily read the meaning of their culture. New findings will enrich the treasure of knowledge about Sundanese culture so that it can maintain its existence.

As an artist who adapts to his natural surroundings, Sunaryo applies *Sundanese* elements philosophically and visibly, such as Selasar Sunaryo Art Space (SSAS) which adopts the Sundanese environment in the form of physical buildings and courtyards, his residence in Dago Pakar which applies the *Sundanese* spirit from the allocation of rooms, to the stone museum.

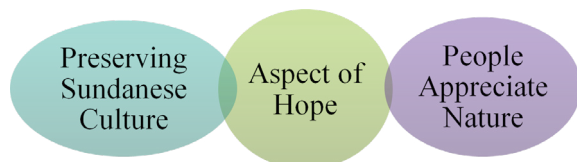


**Figure 6. Aspects of Intrinsic Drivers of Javanese Individuals in living Sundanese Culture**

#### *People Appreciate Nature*

Anthony, the founder of *Bumi Putih Spiritual Jewelry*, through the grain accessories he creates, wants to invite people to look back at the simplicity of life and appreciate the little things that go unnoticed. For Anthony, when people buy his creations or just share their knowledge about grains, they have taken a leap to appreciate nature.

From a cultural perspective, through his work, Anthony tries to remind us that in Sundanese culture, humans and nature are the same, creatures living on earth. With the growing awareness of respect for nature and fellow humans, Anthony hopes that Indonesia will become a great nation, a nation that respects its natural surroundings and local wisdom.



**Figure 7. The aspects of hope for Javanese individuals in living Sundanese culture**

#### **The Meaning of *Kasundaan* for Javanese Individuals**

The meaning of *Kasundaan* is the informant's understanding of *Kasundaan*. Each individual has their own meaning of the concept of *Kasundaan*. This understanding influences informants' behavior in *Kasundaan*.

**Table 3. The Meaning of *Kasundaan* for Javanese Individuals**

No.	The meaning of <i>Kasundaan</i>	Informant(s)
1.	Sundanese way of thinking	Jakob, Endang, Jeihan, Sunaryo, Anthony
2.	Sundanese traits	Indrawati, Trianti

#### ***Sundanese Way of Thinking***

Mindset is the basis of action for Sundanese people in showing their culture. Although invisible to the eye, mindset is essential. It can be owned by anyone, not necessarily people of Sundanese descent who were born and raised in Pasundan land.

Jakob Sumardjo interpreted *Kasundaan* from the mindset of Sundanese society. According to Jakob, the mindset makes everything produced in the form of culture become Sundanese.

"Culture can be a place. But the Sundanese is the mindset. Sundanese artifacts, Sundanese objects, their actions are interpreted by Sundanese thoughts. The Sundanese, in my opinion, are there. It means the way of thinking, making things meaningful for Sundanese people". (Soemardjo, interview)

The same thing was conveyed by Endang, who interpreted *Kasundaan* as local intelligence with many values that can be applied in everyday life. These values are timeless.

"The value of tritangtu, the three that determine human life. In tritangtu, humans must relate to humans and nature. Tritangtu is implemented in three words too, silih asih, asah, asuh." (Caturwati, interview)

Painter Jeihan, who hails from Boyolali, Central Java, interprets *Kasundaan* as a form of high civilization. Jeihan mentions several characteristics that indicate the Sundanese people have a high civilization,

"Sundanese people have their own language. That shows a very high civilization. Have their own view of life. They have their own religion, of which there are still traces today, namely Sunda *wiwitan*." (Sukmantoro, interview)

Environmental awareness is important to maintain and protect the environment. Environmental awareness is the basic of local wisdom, which usually a combination of religious values and various values that exist in society (Yasir, Firdaus, & Awza, 2023).

Sunaryo interprets *Kasundaan* as universal and spiritual values. The concept is reflected in the life of the traditional Sundanese community through the concept of local wisdom of balanced interaction with nature.

"If we look at it, the old Sunda is actually very universal and very spiritual. Sunda *wiwitan* considers us part of nature, not conquering nature. The application of



Sundanese philosophical lifestyle, not arrogant, humble” (Sunaryo, interview).

*Kasundaan* as the harmony of life with nature is also interpreted by Anthony. For Anthony, in Sundanese culture, everything is full of simplicity and humility, life with nature must be in harmony. Humans should not dominate nature, but must be able to balance themselves with nature, because nature has arranged everything (Soetrisno, interview).

### Good Values

Indrawati Lukman interpreted *Kasundaan* as good values. This interpretation emerged in line with Indrawati's life experience since childhood. In her family environment, the founder of Studio Tari Indra (STI) was taught about the good things about *Kasundaan* by her parents who were educators. Her mother was an English teacher and her father was a lecturer at ITB.

“As an educator, my mother and father also brought the values of politeness. So I automatically *don't* know what rude means. I think Sundanese is just good.” (Lukman, interview)

This understanding of *Kasundaan* continued until Indrawati pursued classical Sundanese dance. Based on her experience, Indrawati wants Sundanese dance to be considered good in all aspects, such as the dance, the dancers, the behavior, the music, and the costumes worn by the dancers. Therefore, in every dance performance of her work, both performed by herself and performed by her dancers, Indrawati presents Sundanese dance with glamorous costumes.

Trianti, a lecturer at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI) Bandung, interprets *Kasundaan* as a dynamic culture, not rigid, because it can adjust to existing conditions according to the concept of *ngigelan jaman*. Trianti gave an example of this in dance.

“When teaching the creation aspect, the concept of *ngigelan jaman* is very useful. When I make a movement creation, the movement can be more flexible to be created.” (Trianti, interview)

For Trianti, Sundanese culture has shaped her into a dynamic individual, allowing her to be creative in the arts and culture or express herself when interacting without being hindered by boundaries or rules that she must follow, as she had before moving to Bandung.

### The Meaning of Being Sundanese for Javanese Individuals

Based on the research, the meaning of *ber-Kasundaan* carried out by Javanese individual

research informants is divided into three meanings, namely discovering the Sundanese people's fundamental way of thinking, cultural rootedness, and self expression.

**Table 4. The Meaning of Being Sundanese for Javanese Individuals**

No.	The meaning of being Sundanese	Informant(s)
1.	Discovering the Sundanese People's Fundamental Way of Thinking	Jakob
2.	Cultural Rootedness	Indrawati, Jeiham, Sunaryo, Anthony
3.	Self Expression	Endang, Trianti

### Discovering the Sundanese Fundamental Way of Thinking

Local wisdom is understood as a way of life of a community based on the teachings, ideology and philosophy of life of a culture. Local wisdom is not only formed from the process with the environment, but also from ancestral heritage. (Darmastuti, Bajari, Martodirdjo, & Maryani, 2016). Since 2000, Jakob Sumardjo has dedicated his research to Sundanese artifacts to uncover the fundamental ways of thinking that define Sundanese society. Through his findings, Sumardjo has pinpointed Tritangtu as the core principle that underlies the Sundanese mindset. This principle emphasizes the importance of conflict resolution by introducing a third element, instead of eliminating one of the conflicting elements.

Sumardjo believes that the Sundanese possess the skill to unite opposing forces into a harmonious whole that is agreeable to all parties involved. In essence, Tritangtu is a crucial component of Sundanese culture and philosophy and serves as a roadmap for understanding various aspects of Sundanese life and culture.

“The art of the Sundanese is how to unite the opposites into a unity that is accepted by both parties.” (Sumardjo, interview)

### Cultural Rootedness

Practicing *Kasundaan* as cultural rootedness was presented by Indrawati, Jeiham, Sunaryo, and Anthony. Indrawati expressed that dance is an essential part of her life, having fallen in love with Sundanese dance at a young age and dedicated herself to it wholeheartedly. She believes that her soul is Sundanese and wouldn't feel at home learning any other dance form.

“My heart is already Sundanese. If I was told to learn Javanese dance, I wouldn't

feel at home, like I feel at home dancing Sundanese, because my soul is already Sundanese.” (Lukman, interview)

Jeihan, a renowned painter, attributes his success to his cultural integration with Sundanese society. Although he may not speak Sundanese, he understands it very well. He feels comfortable and well-integrated with the Sundanese culture.

Sunaryo, an artist, interprets *Kasundaan* as an adaptation to the environment around him. He uses his intuitive sensitivity to absorb ideas from the Sundanese land that surrounds him. His work is more philosophical in nature, and he applies the idea of the environment to it.

Sunaryo applies the idea of the environment to his work. It is more philosophical in nature. Some of the works that take ideas from the surrounding Sundanese environment include the *Monument to the Struggle of the People of West Java*, *Selasar Sunaryo*, and his residence in Bukit Pakar Timur.

Anthony has been creating accessories from grains since 2009 to showcase his love for Sundanese culture. For him, Sundanese is a way of life that encompasses thinking, acting, and creating. He adopted *Kasundaan* as a way of life, incorporating the original Sundanese wisdom values such as *cageur*, *bageur*, *bener*, *pinter*, *singer*, which he strives to apply in his daily life and work.

“Honestly, I am *Sundanese* in body and soul, in terms of thinking, acting and creating. For me, Sundanese is a *way of life*. So, it’s not about language, not about clothes, not about *iket*, *not about* beliefs. Sunda is a way of life.” (Soetrisno, interview)

### **Self Expression**

Endang and Trianti view Sundanese as a means of self-expression. Endang expresses her identity as a Sundanese through her artistic creations, which in turn makes her feel more fulfilled and useful to others. According to her, by expressing herself through her art, she can build her existence and make her life more meaningful.

Trianti believes that applying *Kasundaan* (Sundanese culture) in her life has helped her to be more expressive and unlock her full potential. She feels that Sundanese culture has made her more open and lively, which has helped her professionally as a teacher and researcher. As a teacher, she is more easily accepted by children because of her expressive nature, and as a researcher, she is more immersed and fluid with her research subjects.

Both Endang and Trianti agree that Sundanese culture is beautiful and dynamic, and through dancing and other art forms, they can express themselves in a more beautiful and meaningful way.

### **Self-Meaning of Javanese Individuals in Sundanese Culture**

The self-meaning of Javanese individuals in Sundanese culture is intended as an interpretation of the informant’s role in the Sundanese community where the informant is located. The results showed that there are two meanings of Javanese individual self in Sundanese culture, namely the self that explores Sundanese cultural knowledge (Jakob) and the self that maintains culture (Endang, Jeihan, Sunaryo, Indrawati, Trianti, and Anthony).

#### ***Self as Sundanese Cultural Knowledge Explorer***

Jakob Sumardjo is a passionate student of Sundanese culture. He enjoys exploring the core philosophy of this culture and is committed to revealing the truth about it. With his exceptional philosophical thinking skills, he uncovers the knowledge of Sundanese cultural relics. Jakob shares his new-found knowledge with the public through writing in newspapers and compiling it in a book. According to him, the most important thing is to express his findings, even if they are not accepted.

Jakob is thrilled to research the Sundanese cultural mindset through artifacts. He always finds something new to learn, making his studies exciting and never boring. As Jakob puts it:

“There is no boredom when doing research. In fact, we are more enthusiastic because we want to prove our basic knowledge, whether it is true or not. Is it proven in the field? The more things that are proven, the more convinced I am that this is true”. (Sumardjo, interview).

#### ***Self as the Culture Preservator***

The efforts made by Javanese individuals in practicing Sundanese culture lead them to the preservation of Sundanese cultural values. This was conveyed by Endang, Jeihan, Sunaryo, Trianti, Indrawati, and Anthony. Although conveyed in different sentences, the common thread is that the meaning of self as a cultural preserver was highlighted in their efforts.

Endang feels that by giving, her life feels more meaningful and healthy. One of the things Endang has done to benefit others is to create a book on Sundanese fashion makeup for teaching purposes. The creation of the book was motivated

by the absence of a written source that could be used as a reference for teaching.

Having benefited from the writing of her first book, Endang, who is literate in Sundanese classical dance, was then moved to put her knowledge of all things related to dance into books. Endang's books include *Biography of R. Tjetje Somantri 1892-1963: A Sundanese Dance Reformer* (2000), *Dance in Tatar Sunda* (2007), *Kariaan Dance: A Model for Children's Dance Learning in Subang, West Java* (2008). These books are a form of preservation of Sundanese culture by Endang, as they contain information related to Sundanese culture manifested in the form of dance.

Jeihan emphasized that whatever he does or achieves is unconsciously influenced by Sundanese culture. With the belief that his ancestors came from Sunda, Jeihan has positioned himself as a Sundanese and preserved Sundanese culture through a series of behaviors. He named his residence in Cigadung as Bumi Asih Jeihan and installed a kujang on the roof of the gasebo in his house and the roof of his house in the typical Sundanese shape, namely Julang Ngapak, which means the Julang bird flapping its wings.

Sunaryo's efforts to create a harmonious relationship between humans and nature can encourage the preservation of Sundanese nature. One of the local wisdom values of Sundanese society is to maintain a good relationship with nature. This value is embedded in the old Sundanese community, represented by the Baduy community with its Sunda Wiwitan teachings. Thus, maintaining a good relationship with nature can be said to be an effort to maintain Sundanese cultural values and Sunaryo as an individual perpetrator can be called a preserver of Sundanese culture.

Trianti's interest in Sundanese cultural arts has impacted her significantly, making her a more expressive individual. Therefore, *Kasundaan* is the way Trianti chooses to continue to develop herself and her interest in Sundanese cultural arts. Trianti enjoys everything she does in *Kasundaan*, as part of the process of learning the values of life. One of her ways is to conduct research on Sundanese cultural arts that are practiced by the community.

Being born to Javanese parents does not make Indrawati think of herself as Javanese. Instead, she feels like a true Sundanese. The attachment of *Kasundaan* in Indrawati, which

radiates through language and behavior, makes people who interact with her do not doubt that she is Sundanese.

"Everyone knows I'm Sundanese. People know I'm Javanese when they see my name. Because our behavior is already Sundanese." (Lukman, interview)

In addition to language and behavior, Indrawati's *Kasundaan* is also demonstrated through her ability to dance classical dances and create dance creations based on the choreographic knowledge she gained in the United States. She also established Indra Dance Studio (STI) in 1968, as an effort to regenerate Sundanese classical dance. In any condition, Indrawati continues to maintain the existence of STI. The various efforts made by Indrawati are part of the preservation of Sundanese culture. Thus, Indrawati's interpretation of the role of self in Sundanese culture can be called the self-preserver of Sundanese culture.

For Anthony, creating art is a way to show his love for Sundanese culture. It's not just about producing something, but as a way to apply the concepts and values in Sundanese culture into a tangible form in life.

## CONCLUSION

Being Sundanese is a Javanese informants' choice based on their awareness. The awareness of individuals is formed through the interactions in their environment. The motives of Javanese individuals practicing Sundanese culture arise from a combination of extrinsic and intrinsic motivating factors, as well as the aspect of hope.

Extrinsic motivating aspects come from outside the individual and include factors such as interaction with the social and natural environment, information about Sundanese culture and the dynamic rhythm and movement of Sundanese performance. On the other hand, the intrinsic motivating aspects, come from within the individual and their nuclear family, consist of interests, hobbies and talents, rootedness to Sundanese culture, and the desire to fit in. Both aspects contribute to aspects of hope that individual informants want to achieve in performing Sundanese, such as preserving Sundanese culture and increasing appreciation for nature. Individuals perceive *Kasundaan* not only as an inward practice but also as an outward expression of their daily behavior and contributions to the Sundanese community.



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